Gastrell (F.)

THRENODIA CESTRIENSIS:

A

POEM

Sacred to the Memory

OF

The Right Reverend Father in GOD

FRANCIS

Late L^d Biſhop of *CHESTER.*

------Cui Religio & Juſtitiæ Soror
Incorrupta Fides, nudáq; Veritas
Quando ullum invenient Parem?

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BRITISH MUSEUM

A

POEM, &c.

COuld Virtue, Learning, and Religion, All
The Wiſe allow us Great, or Good to call;
Could all, that we in Theſe revere, or love,
Compaſſion in the King of Terrors move,
Reverſe, or reſpite the Decree of Fate,
And give important Lives a longer Date;
GASTRELL had longer ſtill his Heaven deferr'd,
And to his Own the Church's Good preferr'd.

In Her juſt Cauſe his great and ſearching Mind
By Heav'n enlighten'd, and by Books refin'd,
Had ſpent it's Thought, intenſeſt Thought a while,
And ſtill with learned, and religious Toil
Purſu'd th' unfiniſh'd Schemes; his glorious Zeal
Projected for the State, and Church's Weal.
What Good to both in Him great ANN deſign'd,
The Prelate and the Patriot wiſely joyn'd,
Shew, and interpret all the Royal Mind.

Still

Still leave it doubtful in Life's tedious Night
(In which ſuch Stars direct our Steps aright)
Still as They in this Hemiſphere mov'd on,
Which of the two with greater Luſtre ſhone;
With greater only there, in that bleſs'd Place,
Where no Clouds riſe to ſhade Truth's glorious Face;
No Myſteries to hide her from his Sight,
Who now enjoys that *God*, we know is *Light*,
And *ſees him as he is*----
Their Lot, who dare, like Him, in Truth's Defence
Appear, and plead for injur'd Innocence.

Thus far, when Fame at firſt his Death divulg'd,
The Muſe my Grief, and Gratitude indulg'd,
Suffer'd me o'er the ſacred Urn to weep,
And then not further try th' unfathom'd Deep:
The Saint leave in Poſſeſſion of his Heav'n,
To ſing his Praiſe, ſhe ſaid, to others giv'n;
Too arduous for Thee, too great the Task,
All *Granta*, and *Oxonia*'s Tongues 'twill ask;
Nay all the Breath, the Voice, the Tongues of Fame,
To ſound the ſacred and immortal Name,

To Learning and Religion ever dear,
While ſacred Things the Name of Sacred bear,
And what Few imitate, ſtill All revere.
Virtue like His, exalted Reaſon join'd
With ſteady, great Integrity of Mind,
So great, ſo firm, immoveable, and pure,
From Change in Heav'n alone 'tis more ſecure;
Where it does now with greater Luſtre ſhine,
New Glory ſtill deriv'd from the Divine.

Forbear, raſh Youth t' attempt the ſacred Theme,
What's ſo ſublime thy Folly may blaſpheme,
Thy Numbers cannot, as 'tis juſt, commend,
The Prelate, Patriot, Patron, and the Friend;
Thou'lt deſecrate his Herſe with artleſs Lays,
And that Detraction be Thou fancy'ſt Praiſe.

But ſince the ſacred Nine their Aid refuſe,
Ev'n Grief, or Gratitude ſhall be my Muſe;
I'll crowd, and ſing amongſt the learned Throng,
While He, who is my Theme, inſpires my Song.

Flatt'ring Diſeaſe! how did thy falſe Retreat,
All our deluded Hopes, and Wiſhes cheat!

Still flatter'd Him, he ſtill ſhou'd longer live;
The only Flatterer cou'd Him deceive:
So dark, and blind the Path We Mortals tread,
Ev'n that, which does to Light and Glory lead;
The Hour uncertain, we reſign our Breath,
And *in the midſt of Life we are in Death.*

But oh! from His, Heav'n! What ſhall we preſage,
T' an impious, frantic, unbelieving Age?
Or what to Truth, What dark and gloomy Fate,
In loſing ſuch, ſo great an Advocate?
Who, not of Clouds, or gath'ring Storms afraid,
Or Inroads on Religion's Empire made,
When Schiſms and Hereſies the Church invade,
Still on his Rock, that Church, unſhaken ſtood,
And view'd the Rage of the advancing Flood;
Ready, when e'er Heav'n bid him, to remove
From this dark Vale, to Light and Joy above;
Where Pray'rs of impious Men are never heard,
And only Piety can be preferr'd.

Thou'rt thus at laſt preferr'd, Great Paſtor, where
Thou 'mongſt the *Lauds*, the *Sancrofts* doſt appear,
And mov'ſt in the ſame bright exalted Sphere;

Where

Where the *Kenns*, *Fells*, *Sharps*, *Pearſons*, *Stratfords* ſhine,
But none with greater Luſtre, ſure, than thine.

Here of Compariſons to be afraid,
Too oft by Ignorance, or Envy made,
T' avoid 'em here will pleaſe each ſacred Shade;
If They, that Shine in the Triumphant, know
What's done in the Church Militant below:
And not to pleaſe Them thus were ſure a Crime,
Whoſe Souls were Humble, as their Thoughts Sublime.

There *Smalridge* too, whom 'twou'd be, to forget,
A Fault, almoſt, as his own Virtues, great;
(Alike your Fate, for the ſame Path you trod,
Were call'd, and went alike in haſt to God)
He greets Thee there amongſt the ſacred Train,
Who with the great, the ſupreme Shepherd reign;
In that bleſs'd Fold, where the Sheep ceaſe to ſtray,
And Wolves for ever are forbid to prey.
From Theſe thy watchful Eye preſerv'd thy Flock,
Secure and ſafe as the eternal Rock,
On which their Paſtor ſtood, while Wind and Rain,
Tempeſts and Storms their Fury ſpent in vain,

To

To ſhake thy great impenetrable Mind,
Which Threats could never move, or Favours blind,
Or lead Thee e'er one ſingle Step aſide,
To novel Schemes from Wiſdom thou hadſt try'd,
From Truth (whatever modern Sages talk'd)
Truth's good old Path in which our Fathers walk'd.

Theirs the ſure Steps, in which thou ſtill walk'd on,
('Tis harſh to ſay, Thou almoſt wert alone)
Howe'er it muſt be own'd, thy Virtues were
Exalted far above the common Sphere
Of Virtue, were all great and ſingular,
Like that which govern'd Them, thy pious Zeal
For Truth's important Cauſe, and Church's Weal;
A Zeal with Knowledge, pure, celeſtial Flame,
And holy, like the Place from whence it came
Immoveable as that, 'cauſe fix'd aright,
Warm without Rage, and without Terrour bright:
It, like the Sun, it's kindly Influence
Did heat, and Light, and Warmth, and Life diſpenſe;
Unlike Their Zeal, who ſtill becauſe Divine,
Thine e'er oppos'd, and ſtill becauſe 'twas Thine:
This thy Sepulchral Lamp, which ſhines and burns,
While Darkneſs ſtill muſt hide ignoble Urns.

With

With whate'er ſeeming Eaſe, or real Art
We in the World's great *Drama* act our Part,
The *Plot* ſtill vary'd, and ſtill chang'd the *Scene*,
'Till by the laſt they all explain'd have been;
Not thus amus'd thy great diſcerning Soul
Could ſtay to paſs a Judgment on the Whole;
Did not in doubt the ſlow Diſcov'ry wait,
But quickly ſaw quite thro' each gilded Cheat,
The low Ambition, that miſguides the Great.
Proclaim'd Thou wert of the celeſtial Race,
Whoſe gen'rous Ardours no mean Views debaſe,
By Knowledge deep, with equal Virtue mix'd,
Principles firm, on Truth's great Baſis fix'd,
A public Spirit, great, exalted Mind,
Form'd to enlighten, and to bleſs Mankind,
That fathom'd ev'n the Depth of Stateſmen's Schemes,
Still deaf to Politic, or Learned Dreams;
Which, if they're patroniz'd, in courſe create
Schiſms in the Church, and Faction in the State;
Deform our ſacred Laws, and never fail
By op'ning too wide th' unguarded Pale,
To prove again, what the laſt Age has ſhewn,
To let in *All* Religions ends in *None*.

Thy Zeal and Care to watch the ſacred Fold
'Gainſt Their Aſſaults, who nothing ſacred hold,
Or nothing truly ſo, but ſacred Gold,
Will be (juſt Honour to thy Rev'rend Shade!)
By Fame to late Poſterity convey'd.

Where now will Learning, and Religion, find,
Or where haſt Thou, Great Patron, left behind
Him, who will in thy ſteady Steps proceed,
And copy GASTRELL in each glorious Deed?
The great, good Man, t' attempt the Reſcue born
Of all that's Sacred from Contempt and Scorn,
The Church with Light to cheer, with Morals to adorn;
The End, for which ſo great a Soul was made;
Oh! had it but, to Finiſh, longer ſtay'd!
Had Fate thy Thread of Life but longer ſpun,
Great as thou didſt, thou greater Things hadſt done.

Yet in that Fate our Sorrow owns Relief,
In which ſome Hope ſtill mingles with our Grief;
Tho' others Zeal for Truth leſs bright may ſhine,
Sure ſome good Things 'twill do, provok'd by Thine!
While Legiſlators deign to own the Place,
Where Learning ſhews her Venerable Face;

Where

Where She with Majeſty, and Greatneſs looks,
And dwells in Buildings, laſting as her Books;
While learned Senators don't ceaſe to know,
What They to *Granta*, and *Oxonia* owe,
And *Cam* and *Iſis* don't forget to flow.
They, rouz'd by Thee, with Learning and with Laws
(So great the Patrons, and ſo good the Cauſe!)
Will Learning ſtill defend, at once reſtore
What it's great Founders gave in days of Yore,
And give Her, as thy Zeal inſpires 'em, more;
Revere the Mother, nurs'd 'em up in Truth,
That form'd the Man, the Patriot in the Youth.

But 'mongſt her glorious Sons, the aged Dame
Ne'er felt a warmer, ſaw a brighter Flame,
Than that of GASTRELL's filial, pious Love,
So pure, 't can only be refin'd above;
None She (whate'er of other Sons is ſaid)
Living more Lov'd, or more Lamented Dead.

But, Who can the Decree of Heav'n withſtand?
What Merit Fame, unenvy'd Fame command?
'Tis true, Thou well thy glorious Courſe haſt run;
But Shadows will attend the brighteſt Sun.

In Truth's old Path Thee the great Shepherd found,
In Thee Himſelf well repreſented own'd;
Then bid Thee to the Glorious Flock aſcend,
In which the reſt will all unite and end:
Soon Death's dread Harbinger the Summons gave,
To go with Speed, but Honour to the Grave.
He ſaid, the Event prov'd what he ſaid was Fate,
The mourning Flock another Shepherd wait;
They wiſh'd the old One longer might abide,
* Who when he'd view'd, and fed, and bleſs'd 'em, dy'd.

Would Heav'n allay our Grief with Hopes to ſee
But in thy Succeſſor one half of Thee;
What Faction, Schiſm and Hereſie now boaſt,
And We muſt ſtill lament in GASTRELL loſt,
Would give us leſs Temptation to repine,
T' involve our ſacred Mother's Fate in Thine:
Shoul'd (ſure the Wiſh is Piety!) now come
But an *Eliſha* in *Elijah*'s room;
We only then ſhall mourn the Old one leſs,
Were the New Prophet form'd, like Him, to teach, and
[rule, and bleſs.

* He died ſoon after his general Viſitation.

FINIS.

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